

# REPORT TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2019

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

### INTRODUCTION

School Improvement is central to the Council's Corporate vision of improved lives, improved health, economic regeneration, skills development and innovation. The report notes that: -

- a strategic overview of the 2019/20 school improvement draft programme was agreed in the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16 July 2019
- a report on 12 September 2019 focussed on securing excellent pupil attendance
- a second focus in that report was on the early years of pupils induction to education

This report outlines the latest validated results for the education service at each key stage and in external examinations.

It also has a set of cameos from Head Teachers and a College Principal on their successful delivery of education in Bury. The authors of each summary will be in attendance to support the Member scrutiny process.

### OPTIONS

- Members will wish to consider the latest validated results for education in Bury in the context of the school improvement strategy
- Members will wish also to consider good practice as outlined in the cameo summaries
- Members may wish to engage with leading educationalists in the meeting.

In the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of Tuesday 16 July 2019, Members received and considered a **Performance in Bury Schools report**, which contained:-

- an overview of current school performance
- a summary of school improvement strategies
- an overview of the legal and statutory context

In the subsequent meeting of overview and Scrutiny on Tuesday 12 September 2019 Members considered pupil attendance and early years:

- A review of attendance and early years trends
- A summary of the improvement strategies for both service areas
- An assessment of the performance target set

This report develops the scrutiny conversation about school improvement by providing for Member consideration:-

- a set of the latest validated school performance data which will enable Members to further scrutinise key features of the education service
- An appraisal of successful school and college improvement
- A conversation with leading educational practitioners in Bury

## **RECOMMENDED OPTIONS**

1. Members are asked to agree a validated set of education performance data for 2019/20.
2. Members are asked to consider receiving education cameo summaries of individual school and college success.
3. Members are asked to consider discussing school improvement issues with leading educationalists.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

1. The developing strategic scrutiny of school improvement across all phases should enable Members to assess the relative performance profile of key service areas, and the cumulative value which each subsequent stage adds to pupil learning.
2. Powerful scrutiny of each key area in the school improvement repertoire will enable Members to focus on areas of good practice and areas of performance concern. This will enable both shared good practice, and it will target the work of the service on areas of under-performance.
3. The implications of reviewing the validated data in the context of the new school improvement strategy are self-evident; how children succeed in their learning in Bury is critical in both securing their futures and in sustaining the confidence and resilience of our society.
4. Member scrutiny of the validated education data, and their discussions with successful educationalists are central features in ensuring that effective school improvement sits at the heart of the Bury policy process.

## **1:0 SUMMARY**

This report asks Members of Overview and Scrutiny to consider the validated data for education in Bury for the year 2019. The report proposes scrutiny of data and of educational practice at successful centres in Bury.

## **2:0 MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION/DECISION**

Members will wish to determine whether the report is appropriate and sufficient to support their ambitions in scrutinising school improvement arrangements in Bury.

## **3:0 BACKGROUND**

Although responsibilities, governance and accountability in securing education for young people in England is now dispersed responsibility, the Local Authority continues to be responsible for key aspects of learning.

These include pupil admissions, attendance, exclusions, pupil place planning, SEND, aspects of post 16 provision and a general duty to champion the Rights of the Child and safeguarding.

In total, there are more than 200 duties vested in the Local Authority in relation to pupil learning and well-being.

Beyond what is legally required, Bury Council has a moral duty towards its residents to secure their education, training, well-being and economic success.

For these reasons, it has been of concern, both politically and professionally, that school improvement standards are not uniformly good. Recent performance in key phases of learning has been uneven. Bury has previously held a prominent position both regionally and nationally for the attainment of its young people.

After a period of administrative turbulence, and an associated decline in standards of educational attainment, there is now a determined cross-party approach to securing sustained and resilient school improvement. Each element of the school improvement strategy is being tested and strengthened.

The Overview and Scrutiny work programme is intended to enable Members of that Committee to focus sharply our school improvement across each of their meetings in the current year.

## **4:0 BODY OF THE REPORT**

### **a) Overview of current school performance**

**Early Years** - 72% (excluding PVI's) of pupils achieved a good level of development (GLD) and is on an improving trend. This is in line with 2019 national and 3% above GM where Bury is ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> out of the 10 authorities. It is also 3% above the NW where Bury is ranked 5<sup>th</sup> out of the 23 local authorities. 77% of girls achieved GLD compared to 66% of boys. The boys' performance was in line nationally whereas the girls was 1% below. Children with SEN

support (181) scored 2% below national and also dipped by 5% on 2018.

**Key Stage 1 including phonics** - 82% of pupils passed the Year 1 Phonics test which ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> in GM and 5<sup>th</sup> in the NW. 85% of girls passed compared to 79% of boys. Boys' performance was however 1% above those of boys nationally. Children with SEN support scored 2% below national and dipped 10% on 2018. FSM pupils were 1% below the FSM national with EAL pupils' performance dipping 5% and now being 7% lower than the EAL national. Combined RWM at the expected standard was 4% below national which was a dip of 1% on 2018. However, the gap to national at combined greater depth narrowed to 3%.

At the expected standard reading and writing performance dipped. This was replicated across reading, writing and maths at the greater depth standard with the broadest subject gap to national being 5% in reading. Girls outperformed boys in all areas at the expected and greater depth standard except for GDS maths. Writing was the area where the gap between girls and boys in Bury was most significant- 13% at EXS and 8% at GDS.

Performance of SEN pupils was in line with national at the combined expected standard and above in expected reading and maths. Pupils with EAL performed 9% below national at the combined expected standard with writing as an individual subject evidencing the biggest gap to national at 7%. Performance of disadvantaged pupils was above those nationally by 1% in maths, in line for reading and 1% below in writing.

**Key Stage 2** - Combined reading/writing/maths at the expected standard was 1% below national. At the expected standard Reading is 1% below national but in line for maths and writing. At combined greater depth performance improved by 1% with the gap to national being narrowed to 2%. At greater depth scores in reading, writing and maths were all below national with writing being most significant at 5% below. Boys were above boys nationally in expected maths/GPS with girls also scoring above girls nationally in GPS. However both were below boys/girls nationally in all areas of GDS. Girls outperformed boys in all areas except at GDS maths. The attainment gap for EAL pupils was largest in combined reading/writing/maths with a difference to national of -9 however this an improvement of 4% on 2018. Progress scores were above national in reading, writing and maths for the majority however the progress made by girls, EAL, SEN support and high prior attainment in writing were below national.

**Key Stage 4** - Data release on 17 October 2019 (including special) indicates that: Attainment 8 dipped by 1.8 pts, nationally there was an increase of 0.2; Good pass in English and mathematics Bury dipped by 2% whilst national stayed at 43%; Bury is 6% below national in this measure. English 9 – 5 dipped by 1% whilst maths

dipped by 2%; gaps to national are 3% and 6% respectively; Bury's entry for EBacc increased by 1% and is 12% above national; Progress 8 is on a 4 year decline dipping slightly further by -0.06 in 2019; this places Bury 'below average' for progress between Key Stages 2 and 4 for the second year. 6 Bury schools have progress scores below average; 2 well below average, 4 average and 1 above average.

Note: Further analysis of group performance at Key Stage 4 is to follow.

**Key Stage 5** - In 2019, Bury achieved an overall A level APS score of C+, the same as the North West and England. Our more able students are performing less well than both regional and England averages; the number of students in Bury achieving 3A\*/A grades or better fell from 7.8% in 2018 to 7.3% in 2019; this reflected a drop both at North West and England levels, but Bury is still lagging behind both. Those achieving AAB or better has been slightly improving since 2016 but Bury is still behind the North West and the national average.

## **b) Summary of school improvement priorities/strategies**

**Early Years** - Strengthen the team of Early Years moderators aligned with the school-led system model

**Key Stage 1 including phonics** - Priorities have been shared through the school-led system model and primary clusters have identified one or two priorities for their annual work plans. The priorities are:

Phonics:

- Reduce the gap between the performance of boys (79%) and girls (85%)
- Address the dip in the performance of SEN/EAL children

### **Key Stage 1:**

- Reduce the current 4% gap to national (65%) in combined R/W/M at the expected standard. (Reading and writing have the largest subject gaps to national at 3%)
- Improve performance in greater depth reading which is currently 5% below national and writing and maths that both fall 4% below

Identify an Associate Headteacher to undertake diagnostic to inform actions to improve practice. Legacy group from SSIF to continue based on Wayne Tennent project, 2/3 of practitioners have already shared whole school.

**Key Stage 2** - Improve performance in expected reading particularly boys who are now below boys nationally.

- Reduce the current 2% gap to national (10%) in combined R/W/M at the greater depth standard particularly writing which is 5% below.
- Improve the writing progress for girls, EAL, SEN support and high prior attainers

**Key Stage 4** - Continue Year 2 implementation of improving progress in secondary maths strategy; Develop peer working aligned with subject reviews with specialised subject-specific input – involving lead heads of department and senior leaders. The Model to be underpinned by a peer working structure, probably the Schools Partnership Programme; To explore the impact of Bury's 'high' entry for EBacc – 13% & 12% above national for the last 2 years and how the curriculum offer matches pupils' needs and interests. Explore Open element in Progress 8.

## **5:0 SCRUTINY OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT WORK PROGRAMME**

This should support, challenge and reinforce our efforts to substantially recover educational standards in Bury.

## **6:0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Pen portraits – Hoyle Nursery; Vision Multi Academy Trust; The Elton High School and Holy Cross College  
 Overview and Scrutiny Report 12 September 2019  
 Overview and Scrutiny Report – School Improvement: July 2019  
 Bury Council Meeting – July 2019  
 North West Association of Directors of Children's Services (NWADCS)  
 Local Authority Self-Assessment Report 2019  
 Greater Manchester: Support for School Improvement Peer Review 2019  
 Education Act 2016  
 Education Act 2011